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November 29, 1962

Laos - Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, Cuba,

U.S.

The President
The Secretary
Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson
Mr. E. S. Glenn, LS
Miss N. Kushnir, LS

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Anastas I. Mikoyan, First
Deputy Chairman of the
Council of Ministers of the
USSR
Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobryn
Mr. Yuriy N. VINO-GrADOV,
Soviet Delegation to XVII
General Assembly (Interpret
Mr. Igor D. BubNOV, Third
Secretary, Soviet Embassy

The President said that he wished to raise another question before the end of the conversation. This was the question of Laos. It has been agreed that all foreign troops would be withdrawn from that country. American military advisers have been withdrawn but there are still North Viet Nam troops remaining. The Soviet Union also agreed to use its full influence to prevent Laos from being used as a channel to infiltrate South Viet Nam. Reliable intelligence indicates that approximately 500 Communist infiltrators are reaching South Viet Nam through Laos every month. Thirdly, an American plane carrying food at the request of Souvanna Phouma--the Prime Minister whom the Soviets wanted to see as head of the government--was cleared for landing by the airport tower. It was fired on at that moment by Communist units and two Americans were killed.

The President expressed his concern that even while we are working at getting agreement on Cuba an earlier agreement is falling to pieces because the Soviet Union is not fulfilling its obligations.

Mr. Mikoyan said that he would convey the information he received from the President to the Soviet Government. He is certain, however, that the Soviet Union is fulfilling its obligations.

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He would now like to go back to the question of Cuba.

The President said that he wished to speak a little more at length about some extremely important aspects of the Laos question. There has been agreement on Laos between Chairman Khrushchev and the President at Vienna. If this agreement is not fulfilled, it will appear that no other agreement with the Soviet Union can ever be expected to be successfully implemented.

Mr. Mikoyan said that the Soviet Union was fulfilling all its obligations.

To return to the question of Cuba, it is possible that a solution as to form may be found provided there is no difference as to substance. It is necessary to decide to help the Delegations meeting in New York in order to make it possible for the latter to succeed in their task.

The President said that there is a U.S. draft. Does the Soviet Union wish to submit a draft of its own? Does it insist on the idea of a protocol? Or does it desire to work on the basis of the U.S. draft?

Mr. Mikoyan said that the Soviet Delegation would submit a draft.

The President said that there is time to work out this question in New York. What concerns him is that every six months another crisis seems to arise. How can the world go through the next decade under such circumstances?

Mr. Mikoyan said that step by step negotiations will be necessary. The next question to be taken up may be in regard to a non-aggression treaty between the Warsaw Organization and NATO.

The President said that it is strange that there are two countries such as the Soviet Union and the United States which are powerful and wealthy, and which have no direct conflicts of interest to separate them. In spite of that, they find themselves

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perpetually in a state bordering on conflict. At the same time many other parts of the world are facing problems of hunger and underdevelopment. It would be good if the Soviet Union were to devote its efforts to the pursuit of its own interests, in the same way in which the United States devotes its efforts to the pursuit of its own interests, and abandon the belief that it is its job to kindle revolutionary fires all over the world. This would be worth more than 40 non-aggression treaties.

Mr. Mikoyan said that revolutions are not caused by the Soviet Union. It is not the Soviet Union which was the cause of the Cuban revolution; as a matter of fact it knew much less about this revolution than did the United States. He already had said the same thing in January.

The President said that he did not accuse the Soviet Union of having formented the Cuban revolution.

Mr. Mikoyan said that there will be revolutions regardless of what either the Soviet Union or the United States do.

The President said that this may be true, but that it was still important for the two countries to understand each other better. How could the Soviet Government believe that the United States would not react on finding that there were 40 missiles emplaced in Cuba? How would the Soviets have reacted if the United States had emplaced 40 missiles in Finland, especially if the government of that country had been as inimical to the Soviet Union as Castro is towards the United States?

Mr. Mikoyan said that there are United States missiles in Turkey very close to the Soviet Union. In spite of that he feels that Soviet citizens may sleep with tranquility, as long as the missiles in question are in American hands. This is because he trusts President Kennedy.

The President said that he has always been of the opinion that American missile bases such as those in Turkey do not make sense. Several have been deactivated and for the last twenty months the United States Government has worked at deactivating more. This is why the emplacing of Soviet missiles in Cuba has come as such a shock.

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It is quite clear that the two governments have misjudged one another. This is a type of misjudgment which neither they nor the world can afford.

Mr. Mikoyan said that he liked the spirit of what the President just said. That is why it is necessary to talk problems over and to agree.

The President said that it was not enough to obtain verbal agreements. They also must be implemented. It would be better perhaps if--as in the case of Laos--the Soviet Union would not always insist that it is fulfilling its obligations. It would be better if it were ready to admit its shortcomings as the United States is ready to admit its own shortcomings, and work harder to correct them.

Mr. Mikoyan said that problems had to be taken up one by one.

The President said that in doing so it must be remembered that the two countries have very few genuinely divergent interests, and yet there are many conflicts between them. There is something very wrong with such a situation.

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